

My name is Frances Herman and I am a resident of New Hartford. I am a member of CT Against Gun Violence and a Deacon in our local Congregational church.

I am testifying in support of the \$3.6 million included in the Governor's budget adjustment bill for the Department of Public Health to fund gun violence prevention programs.

I am greatly saddened at the increased loss of life and injuries due to gun violence in our state. I am also motivated by my Christian faith to support efforts to discern and dismantle the root causes of gun violence. Though I am proud of Connecticut's strong gun laws and law enforcement professionals, I am convinced that we need to invest in developing and disseminating methods to de-escalate conflict and interrupt cycles of violence.

While I believe reducing deaths and injuries – physical and psychological - from gun violence is a moral imperative, it also makes economic sense. According to data noted by the Giffords Law Center, it is estimated that gun violence costs CT taxpayers between \$60-\$90 million per year.

While I commend the Governor for proposing \$3.6 million to fund community gun violence prevention programs, I urge the legislature to do more by creating an Office of Gun Violence Prevention in the Department of Public Health, and committing to more substantial levels of funding.

Thank you for reading this testimony.

Sincerely,

Frances Herman of New Hartford